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PHILOSOPHICAL  
TRANSACTIONS,  
OF THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY  
OF  
LONDON.

FOR THE YEAR MDCCCXVI.

PART I.

LONDON,

PRINTED BY W. BULMER AND CO. CLEVELAND-ROW, ST. JAMES'S;  
AND SOLD BY G. AND W. NICOL, PALL-MALL, BOOKSELLERS TO HIS MAJESTY,  
AND PRINTERS TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

MDCCCXVI.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE Committee appointed by the *Royal Society* to direct the publication of the *Philosophical Transactions*, take this opportunity to acquaint the Public, that it fully appears, as well from the council-books and journals of the Society, as from repeated declarations which have been made in several former *Transactions*, that the printing of them was always, from time to time, the single act of the respective Secretaries, till the Forty-seventh Volume: the Society, as a Body, never interesting themselves any further in their publication, than by occasionally recommending the revival of them to some of their Secretaries, when, from the particular circumstances of their affairs, the *Transactions* had happened for any length of time to be intermitted. And this seems principally to have been done with a view to satisfy the Public, that their usual meetings were then continued, for the improvement of knowledge, and benefit of mankind, the great ends of their first institution by the Royal Charters, and which they have ever since steadily pursued.

But the Society being of late years greatly enlarged, and their communications more numerous, it was thought advisable that a Committee of their members should be appointed, to reconsider the papers read before them, and select out of them such as they should judge most proper for publication in the future *Transactions*; which was accordingly done upon the 26th of March, 1752. And the grounds of their choice are, and will continue to

be, the importance and singularity of the subjects, or the advantageous manner of treating them ; without pretending to answer for the certainty of the facts, or propriety of the reasonings, contained in the several papers so published, which must still rest on the credit or judgment of their respective authors.

It is likewise necessary on this occasion to remark, that it is an established rule of the Society, to which they will always adhere, never to give their opinion, as a Body, upon any subject, either of Nature or Art, that comes before them. And therefore the thanks, which are frequently proposed from the Chair to be given to the authors of such papers as are read at their accustomed meetings, or to the persons through whose hands they receive them, are to be considered in no other light than as a matter of civility, in return for the respect shewn to the Society by those communications. The like also is to be said with regard to the several projects, inventions, and curiosities, of various kinds, which are often exhibited to the Society ; the authors whereof, or those who exhibit them, frequently take the liberty to report, and even to certify in the public news-papers, that they have met with the highest applause and approbation. And therefore it is hoped, that no regard will hereafter be paid to such reports, and public notices ; which in some instances have been too lightly credited, to the dishonour of the Society.

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The PRESIDENT and COUNCIL of the ROYAL SOCIETY adjudged the Medal on SIR GODFREY COPLEY's Donation, for the year 1815, to DAVID BREWSTER, LL.D., for his Paper on the Polarisation of Light by Reflection, printed in the Philosophical Transactions ; And the Gold and Silver Medals on COUNT RUMFORD's Donation, to WILLIAM CHARLES WELLS, M. D. for his Essay on Dew, published in the course of the preceding year.

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